2017 FCC FARMLAND VALUES REPORT

This report covers the period from January 1 to December 31, 2017

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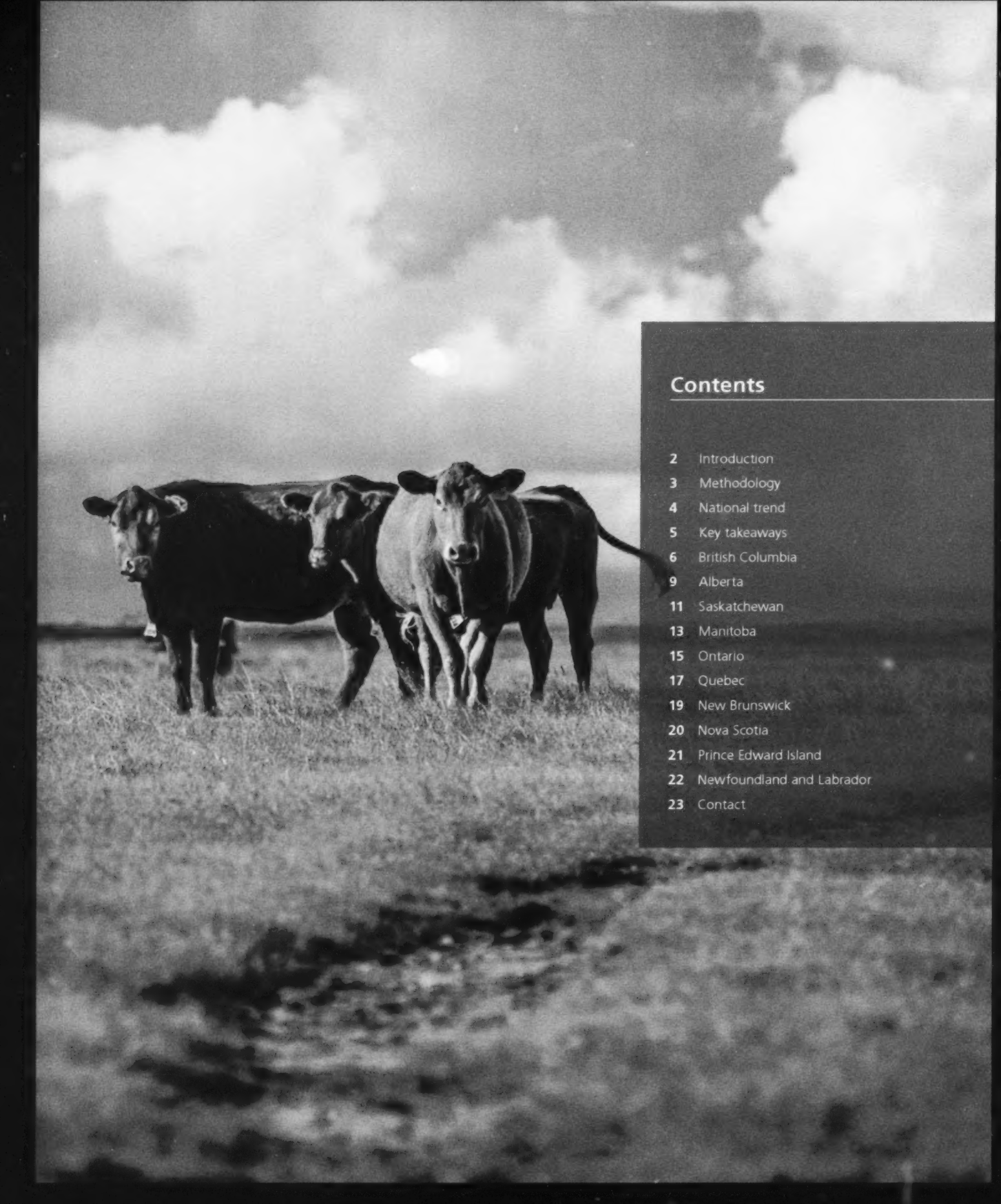

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Introduction

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) understands the value of having access to solid market-value information when making management decisions. That's why FCC compiles and releases the Farmland Values Report. It tracks and highlights average changes in farmland values – regionally, provincially and nationally and, for the first time this year, the report provides a value indicator that allows for a region-to-region price per acre comparison.

Price, of course, is only one factor that must be considered when purchasing land. Other factors include the location, timing of an expansion, and the individual's financial situation and personal goals. Producers should do additional homework, such as ensuring their budgets have room to flex if land prices or commodity prices or interest rates shift. Market conditions and trends can change rapidly and this can impact values.

This report describes changes from January 1 to December 31, 2017. It provides one source of information to help producers manage risk and make informed business decisions.

Methodology

FCC established a system based on benchmark farm properties to monitor variations in cultivated land values across Canada. These parcels are representative of each area of the country.

FCC appraisers estimate market value using recent comparable land sales. These sales must be arm's-length transactions. Once sales are selected, they're reviewed, analyzed and adjusted to the benchmark farm properties.

The overall trend in the sales price data for each region is also considered when determining variations in farmland values.

The reference value published by FCC is derived from the average value of our benchmark properties and the average sales price in each region.

The value range published by FCC represents 90 per cent of sales identified by FCC in the past year in these areas. The range excludes five per cent of the highest and lowest sales in order to remove the outlier values and keep the range more reflective of typical sales prices. This data is provided to help understand the variability in the value of farmland in each area.

% Change in farmland values		
Provinces	**2017**	**2016**
B.C.	2.7%	8.2%
Alta.	7.3%	9.5%
Sask.	10.2%	7.5%
Man.	5.0%	8.1%
Ont.	9.4%	4.4%
Que.	8.2%	7.7%
N.B.	5.8%	1.9%
N.S.	9.5%	9.1%
P.E.I.	5.6%	13.4%
N.L.	N/A*	N/A*
Canada	8.4%	7.9%

*There was an insufficient number of publicly reported transactions to accurately assess farmland values in Newfoundland and Labrador.

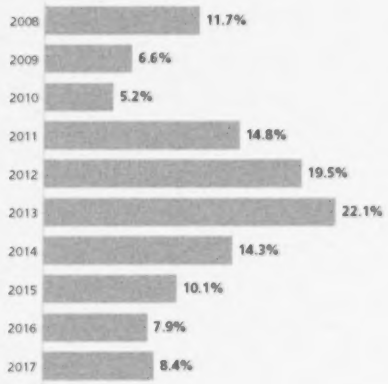
National trend

The average value of Canadian farmland increased 8.4 per cent in 2017, following gains of 7.9 per cent in 2016 and 10.1 per cent in 2015.

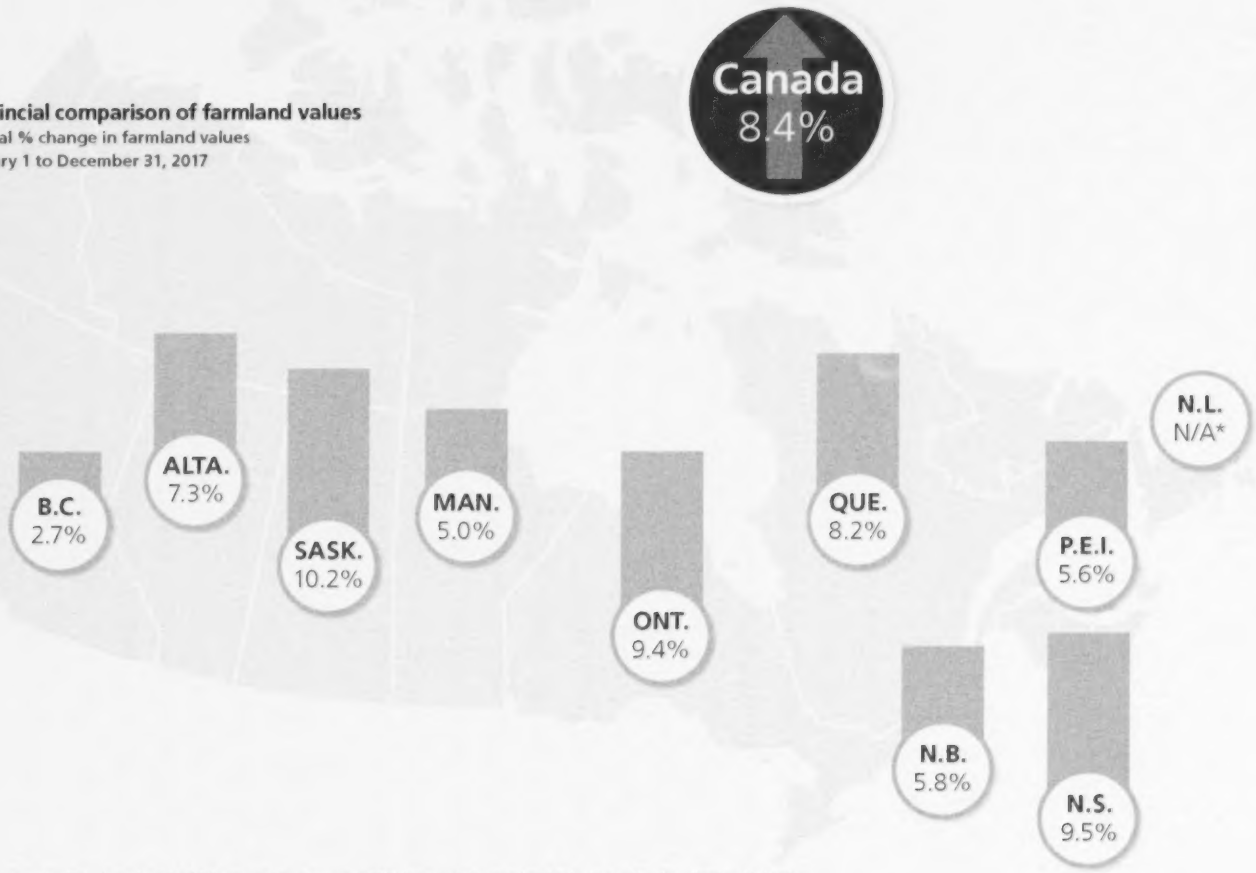
In all provinces farmland values increased. Saskatchewan experienced the highest average increase at 10.2 per cent, followed by Nova Scotia at 9.5 per cent, Ontario at 9.4 per cent and Quebec at 8.2 per cent. British Columbia had the lowest overall provincial average increase at 2.7 per cent, followed by Manitoba at five per cent, Prince Edward Island at 5.6 per cent and New Brunswick at 5.8 per cent. Alberta fell right in the middle of the pack with an average increase of 7.3 per cent. Note that in Newfoundland and Labrador there were not enough publicly reported transactions to fully assess farmland values.

When looking at the national results, it is important to remember the reported number is an average. The differences between regions within each province vary widely.

Canada
Annual % change in farmland values



Provincial comparison of farmland values
Annual % change in farmland values
January 1 to December 31, 2017



*There was an insufficient number of publicly reported transactions in 2017 to accurately assess farmland values in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Key takeaways

Timing lends context: Some of last year's average farmland value increase may also be a result of timing as most provinces recorded a faster pace of increase in the first six months of the year while interest rate increases didn't occur until the latter half of 2017. Recent increases in borrowing costs and expectations of further increases could cool the farmland market in 2018.

Sharpen the pencil: With the steady climb in farmland values, now is a good time for producers to review and adjust their business plan to reflect variable commodity prices and slightly higher interest rates, assess their overall financial position and focus on increasing productivity.

Be aware of risk: Farm operations need to be cautious in regions where the growth rate of farmland values has exceeded that of farm incomes in recent years. That's why it's a good idea for producers to have a risk management plan in place to protect their business against unforeseen circumstances and events.

British Columbia

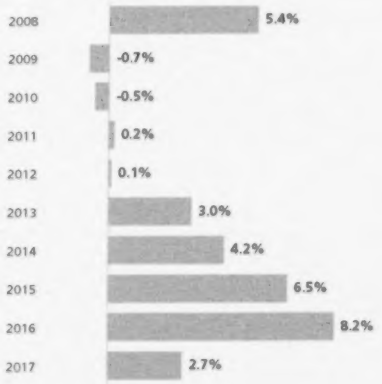
The average value of British Columbia farmland increased by 2.7 per cent in 2017, following a gain of 8.2 per cent in 2016. For the most part, B.C. farmland values remained relatively stable, except for South Coast and Vancouver Island regions, which saw significant increases.

In most areas, the strongest demand for farmland was from producers looking to expand their operations. Non-traditional buyers – those who invest in farmland, but are not active farmers – and industry consolidation also contributed to higher values in some specific areas. Throughout most of the province, there continued to be demand from rural residential buyers seeking land close to urban centers. In some instances, strong competition among buyers facing limited available land contributed to the increase in land values.

Producer demand was centred around the purchase of high quality land and, in certain areas, land with access to water for irrigation. Access to water has become more critical, as numerous areas of the province have experienced consecutive years of very dry summer conditions.

Vancouver Island's farmland market continued to have sparse sales for reasonably large agriculture parcels. With few operators looking to sell, this is generally seen as an indicator of a stable sector. However, the growing higher-priced market of the South Coast created greater demand on Vancouver Island for the limited number of parcels on the market, resulting in the province's largest average increase of 23.6 per cent.

British Columbia
Annual % change in farmland values



South Coast region, including the Fraser Valley, saw a fairly low number of farmland sales, mainly due to the limited number of properties on the market. This resulted in an average farmland value increase of 13.9 per cent, down slightly from 17.7 per cent the year before. Larger parcels seemed of particular interest, as some producers sought to expand their operations.

British Columbia farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 **Peace Region-Northern B.C.**	**0.2%**	**$1,543**	**$600 – $1,900**
2 **Cariboo-Chilcotin**	**0.5%**	**$2,447**	**$1,100 – $2,700**
3 **Vancouver Island**	**23.6%**	**$41,784**	**$11,900 – $100,000**
4 **South Coast**	**13.9%**	**$89,314**	**$43,000 – $162,700**
5 **Thompson-Nicola**	**2.7%**	**$10,309**	**$3,100 – $11,800**
6 **Okanagan**	**5.7%**	**$91,978**	**$8,800 – $166,900**
7 **Kootenay**	**4.5%**	**$45,073**	**$2,500 – $50,000**

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

With a 0.2 per cent average increase, Peace Region-Northern B.C. saw a stable farmland market. Though there were some larger transactions in 2017, most market activity involved modest expansion purchases. The area's resource-based economy continued to influence the farmland market, as industry and producers sometimes competed for the same land.

Okanagan region, which saw an average increase of 5.7 per cent, continued to see growing interest from non-traditional buyers leading to solid demand for even large holdings. This was especially true for the winery sector, where there was also some consolidation. The tree fruit sector had significant investment in new plantings this last year, also generating some demand for larger land blocks. The rural acreage market continued to be steady throughout the Okanagan, partly in response to an active urban housing market.

Kootenay region experienced a steady farmland market with a fairly balanced supply and demand situation, resulting in an average farmland value increase of 4.5 per cent. This market continued to be more affordable than some other regions in the province, such as the Okanagan. The smaller acreage market was most active with listings selling quickly at somewhat improved prices from previous years.

Cariboo-Chilcotin region saw transactions for a variety of land types and sizes in various areas of the region. The region is considered a balanced market, recording a 0.5 per cent average increase in farmland values. Most notable for this area was the significant impact of the wildfires, which hindered most of the productive season. The farming community showed great resilience in this time of hardship, rapidly rebuilding lost infrastructure.

With an average farmland value increase of 2.7 per cent, Thompson-Nicola region recorded a steady amount of sales with balanced supply and demand with a good mix of transaction types and sizes that included some irrigated parcels. Only a few larger transactions occurred, along with the sale of some complete smaller ranch operations.

Alberta

Farmland values in Alberta were driven by demand and weather, resulting in a 7.3 per cent average increase, down from a 9.5 average increase in 2016.

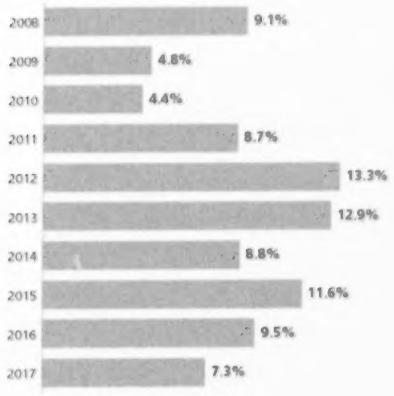
While the province experienced steady demand in all regions, there were pockets of strong demand from competing farm operations as well as decreased demand due to dry conditions. Increases in some areas of northern Alberta were a result of "catching up" from the previous year, when an early winter forced some producers to harvest during spring seeding.

Alberta's economy showed glimmers of recovery from the last resource-based downturn with a return to positive economic growth and optimism in 2017. The grain sector continued to expand into lower-quality lands as the number of acres held by cow-calf producers continued to shrink, along with the overall number of ranchers. Drier conditions in the province have been a large part of overall lower growth in land values this year.

Southern Alberta was impacted in 2017 by a lack of rainfall on dryland, offset by pockets of increased land values due to competition among farm operations. Irrigated land saw a steady to increased demand combined with limited supply, leading to the region's overall average increase of 11.4 per cent.

The Peace region saw the highest increase in farmland values, with steady overall demand and pockets of strong demand from competing farm operations. This resulted in an average increase of 11.5 per cent for the region.

Alberta
Annual % change in farmland values



Central Alberta continued to see steady to increasing demand for farmland. Among the four regions in Alberta, the central region fell in the middle of the pack with an average farmland value increase of 8.3 per cent, very close to the 8.6 per cent increase the year before.

Farmland values in Northern Alberta held steady with an average increase of 0.4 per cent, following a recovery in 2016 that saw the highest average land value increase in the province. Generally there was an overall steady demand for land, however, there were pockets of decreased demand due to weather that made harvest a challenge the past two seasons.

Alberta farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 Peace	11.5%	$2,030	$1,000 – $3,200
2 Northern	0.4%	$3,177	$1,500 – $5,400
3 Central	8.3%	$3,869	$1,200 – $7,000
4 Southern	11.4%	$5,461	$1,600 – $10,800

*FCC reference value $/acre

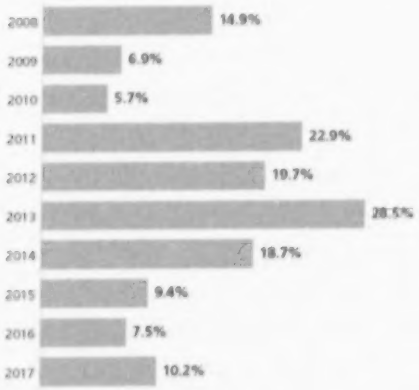
**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%

Saskatchewan

The average value of Saskatchewan farmland increased by 10.2 per cent, up from 7.5 per cent in 2016. The largest increases came from the three western regions of the province. This was the largest average increase in farmland values reported among all provinces.

Good weather conditions in the spring helped producers get most of the acres seeded in a timely fashion, except for some of the northern areas, which were delayed due to excessive moisture. Yields were impacted in southern and central areas by periods of hot-dry conditions, though with the majority of land sales occurring in the first half of the year, any impact that the dry weather may have had on land prices is yet to be seen. Harvest weather was generally favourable throughout the province as producers had fewer rain delays, which allowed them to pull off average to above-average quality crops.

Saskatchewan
Annual % change in farmland values



Saskatchewan farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 North Western	14.9%	$1,891	$600 – $2,900
2 North Eastern	1.5%	$1,728	$700 – $2,300
3 West Central	16.6%	$1,925	$800 – $2,700
4 East Central	2.2%	$1,321	$800 – $2,200
5 South Western	14.2%	$1,755	$700 – $2,600
6 South Eastern	11.2%	$1,710	$800 – $3,200

*FCC reference value $/acre

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%

The southwest region experienced an average farmland value increase of 14.2 per cent, driven by demand by producers wanting to expand their operations.

The northwest and west-central regions of the province saw similar average farmland value increases of 14.9 per cent and 16.6 per cent, respectively. Both regions recorded higher average increases from the previous year, largely due to a competitive market with a limited supply of land for sale.

The northeast and east-central regions saw the most modest average increases of 1.5 and 2.2 per cent, respectively. While the east-central increase remained relatively unchanged from the previous year, the northeast saw a significantly smaller increase from 2016 likely due to uncertainty surrounding a delayed harvest. East-central region has been attractive to outside buyers in the past few years, but more local producers were purchasing land in 2017.

Saskatchewan's southeast region saw an average increase of 11.2 per cent, following no change in 2016. This was a result of a competitive market, especially for higher quality land.

Manitoba

Manitoba farmland values increased by five per cent during 2017, following an 8.1 per cent increase in 2016.

Carryover moisture from the fall of 2016 provided adequate moisture for cereal crops, resulting in above-average to excellent yields in most areas. The dry fall resulted in a good quality harvest for cereals, as well as potatoes. However, these same conditions produced average to below-average yields for canola, soybeans and some feed stocks.

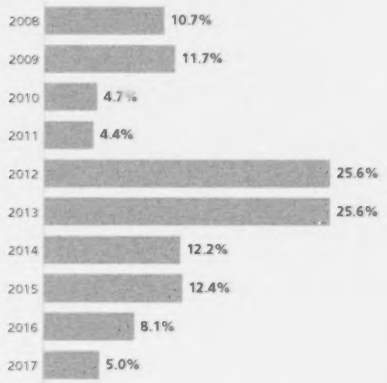
In general, Manitoba saw higher-priced land values remaining relatively stable, while low- to mid-priced land values recorded increases.

The Interlake region saw a 6.5 per cent increase in average farmland values, slightly down from the eight per cent increase in 2016. The overall increase in 2017 was buoyed by a strong demand from farm operations looking to expand.

In the Westman region, strong demand but limited number of sales in the area with higher-priced land resulted in a 5.7 per cent average increase in farmland values, down slightly from a 7.3 per cent increase in 2016. The increase was largely driven by producers wanting to expand their operations into parts of the region offering lower prices, while higher-priced land remained relatively stable.

Parkland region saw a 9.9 per cent average increase in farmland values, up slightly from a 6.8 per cent increase from the year before. Once again, producers looking to expand their operations and landlords selling to their renters – coupled with limited land available for sale – were driving factors behind the region's increase.

Manitoba
Annual % change in farmland values



Central Plains-Pembina Valley reported no change in the average value of farmland in the region, following the highest increase in the province in 2016. Unlike the previous year, higher-priced land in the region saw very little change in ownership, while increased demand for more affordable land had little effect on the average value.

Eastman region has a pocket of intensive livestock producers looking to expand, which partly contributed to the region's 7.3 per cent average farmland value increase, up from 4.3 per cent the year before. Urban expansion from the city of Winnipeg also impacted prices by reducing the amount of available land. In general, higher-priced land in the region remained stable, while more affordable land saw increases.

Manitoba farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 Parkland	9.9%	$2,271	$800 – $3,300
2 Interlake	6.5%	$2,602	$900 – $3,700
3 Westman	5.7%	$2,540	$1,100 – $3,700
4 Central Plains-Pembina Valley	0.0%	$4,770	$1,400 – $8,100
5 Eastman	7.3%	$3,525	$800 – $5,000

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Ontario

The average value of Ontario farmland increased 9.4 per cent in 2017, following a gain of 4.4 per cent in 2016.

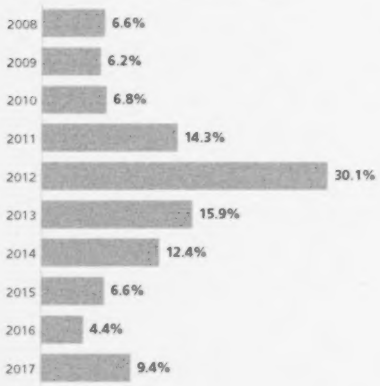
Most of the province continued with a stable upward trend, reflected by a mix of single- and double-digit percentage increases in all regions, except for the northern region, which remained unchanged since 2016. There was a mix of transactions, including real estate brokered, private, property auction and sales through tender. Tender sales appear to be growing in popularity.

Ontario's farmland value increases continued to be fuelled by the strong demand from supply-managed farm operations and cash crop producers competing for a limited amount of available land. Growth in the dairy sector motivated some producers to expand their land base, while favourable growing conditions and crop yields fuelled demand from cash crop operations throughout Ontario.

The north-central region led the province with the most significant increase of 24 per cent. This was followed by southeastern, south-central and northwestern regions with increases of 15.6 per cent, 15.1 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively.

The remaining regions in Ontario posted single-digit increases with the exception of the northern region, which was unchanged. Demand remained strong for farmland in southeastern and southwestern Ontario, where favourable soil types allow for a variety of specialty crops to be grown, thus creating potentially higher returns.

Ontario
Annual % change in farmland values



Ontario farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 Northern	0.0%	$3,621	$900 – $4,300
2 Eastern	8.5%	$9,624	$2,300 – $14,500
3 North Western	11.0%	$8,183	$5,000 – $16,400
4 North Central	24.0%	$7,002	$3,700 – $14,900
5 South Western	2.8%	$16,819	$10,200 – $22,700
6 South Central	15.1%	$15,571	$9,600 – $24,000
7 Southern	4.2%	$12,138	$7,000 – $18,400
8 South Eastern	15.6%	$9,929	$6,100 – $17,900

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Quebec

In Quebec, the average value of farmland increased by 8.2 per cent in 2017, following an increase of 7.7 per cent in 2016.

Mauricie-Portneuf, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Bas-Saint-Laurent-Gaspésie regions had the largest average increases of 18.8 per cent, 14.5 per cent and 14.4 per cent, respectively. Crop producers and supply-managed operations were the main buyers of farmland in all regions of Quebec in 2017.

The largest increase was seen in the Mauricie-Portneuf region, where demand for land to expand is strong.

The second-largest increase came from the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, where some buyers from the south of the province acquired some of the lowest-priced land in the province to establish or expand their operations. Strong demand for affordable land in Bas-Saint-Laurent-Gaspésie was the main driver behind the increase in that region.

In Montérégie and Laurentides-Lanaudière, where the price per acre remained among the highest in the province, the increase in farmland values was below the provincial average. In general, higher-priced land in the region remained stable compared to the previous year, while more affordable land saw increases.

There was a moderate average increase in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region, except for blueberry fields where the value decreased due to the large stock and lower prices for this small fruit.

Most of the other regions experienced increases that were close to the provincial average.

Quebec
Annual % change in farmland values

Quebec farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
① Abitibi-Témiscamingue	14.5%	$1,275	$800 – $2,000
② Outaouais	9.2%	$2,761	$1,200 – $3,800
③ Laurentides-Lanaudière	3.1%	$12,990	$2,000 – $16,300
④ Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean	10.5%	$3,112	$1,500 – $4,100
⑤ Mauricie-Portneuf	18.8%	$6,454	$3,000 – $9,000
⑥ Montérégie	3.7%	$15,098	$5,900 – $20,600
⑦ Centre-du-Québec	8.9%	$8,527	$3,200 – $11,300
⑧ Bas-Laurent-Gaspésie	14.4%	$2,335	$800 – $4,500
⑨ Chaudière-Appalaches	9.4%	$4,376	$1,800 – $6,000
⑩ Estrie	5.1%	$3,640	$1,200 – $6,100

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

New Brunswick

The average value of New Brunswick farmland increased 5.8 per cent in 2017 following an increase of 1.9 per cent in 2016.

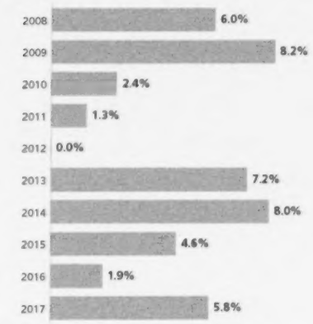
The greatest increase was observed in the southern part of the province dominated by dairy producers, where growth reached 13.9 per cent. The need for additional land for greater forage production as cattle feed has pushed up demand in that region.

Land values in the northern blueberry-production area has decreased due to economic problems that subsist in that industry.

In the potato area, the values have nominally increased by 4.1 per cent. Higher-priced land remained stable while more affordable land saw increases. New Brunswick's potato processing industry is stable and a number of producers have acquired land in the potato belt region.

The presence of non-traditional buyers again contributed to higher demand for farmland, driving up prices for lower-quality land, particularly in the northwestern region. Agriculture, nonetheless, accounted for the majority of farmland buyers in 2017.

New Brunswick
Annual % change in farmland values



New Brunswick farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
① Western	4.1%	$4,366	$1,100 – $5,500
② Northern	-15.6%	$5,081	$2,400 – $5,500
③ Southern	13.9%	$1,781	$800 – $4,000

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Nova Scotia

The average value of Nova Scotia farmland increased 9.5 per cent in 2017, following a gain of 9.1 per cent in 2016.

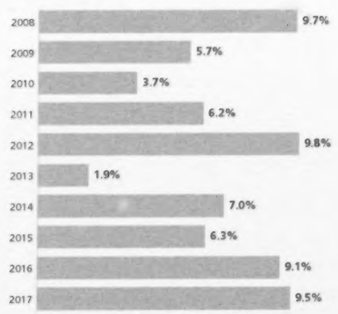
Trends throughout the province have varied. The number of recorded land sales appears to have decreased, yet prices remained strong for the most part.

Farmland values increased by an average of 28.9 per cent in the Annapolis Valley region, following a nine per cent increase in 2016. This part of Nova Scotia continued to be a very competitive area for farmland. Most acquisitions involved smaller acreages and supply-managed farms were significant players in this market, along with vineyards and cash crop operations.

The Truro-Shubenacadie region, dominated by dairy farms, saw virtually no change in overall farmland values – a 0.2 per cent increase, compared to a 9.2 per cent increase in 2016. While there was a slight increase in the Truro area, farmland values decreased in the northern Truro area around Parrsboro, due to the weakening of blueberry prices.

Farmland values in the Pictou-Antigonish region also remained unchanged in 2017, compared to an average increase of 8.8 per cent in 2016. The amount of available land for purchase was sufficient to meet local demand, resulting in price stability.

Nova Scotia
Annual % change in farmland values



Nova Scotia farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 Annapolis Valley	28.9%	$5,419	$1,500 – $10,000
2 Truro-Shubenacadie	0.2%	$3,919	$1,000 – $4,800
3 Pictou-Antigonish	0.0%	$1,778	$1,000 – $1,400

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Prince Edward Island

The average value of Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.) farmland increased 5.6 per cent in 2017, following a gain of 13.4 per cent in 2016. This marks a slowdown in rising farmland prices compared to the previous two years.

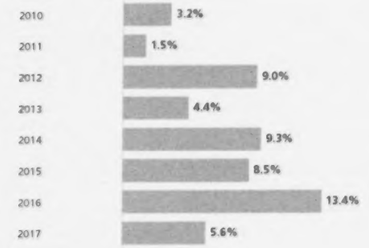
Cultivated land continued to increase in farmland values in all areas of the province. Most of the expansion was in the potato sector.

Queens and Prince regions saw increases of 8.4 and 4.6 per cent, respectively, down from the double-digit increases of 2016. Increased milk quota has improved the purchasing power of some dairy farms actively seeking more land for feed production. Purchasers from outside P.E.I continued to be active in acquiring farms and relocating to the island.

The Kings region saw average farmland values increase by 1.5 per cent in 2017, after having the largest average increase on the island in 2016. This area has seen a higher volume of land transactions in the past few years. Land was still selling, but a backlog of smaller farm properties has already sold and the rush to buy land was less intense than in 2016.

Despite steady land price increases, P.E.I. farmland remains much less expensive than many other areas outside the province.

Prince Edward Island
Annual % change in farmland values



Prince Edward Island farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 Prince	4.6%	$4,298	$2,300 – $5,500
2 Queens	8.4%	$3,618	$2,300 – $5,500
3 Kings	1.5%	$2,966	$1,500 – $3,500

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Newfoundland and Labrador

For the second consecutive year, there was an insufficient number of publicly reported transactions in 2017 to fully assess farmland values in Newfoundland and Labrador.

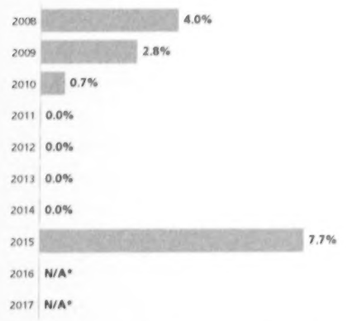
Newfoundland and Labrador farmland regions

Region	% change	Value $/acre*	Value range**
1 West	N/A	N/A	N/A
2 East	N/A	N/A	N/A

*FCC reference value $/acre.

**The value range represents 90% of the sales in each area and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Newfoundland and Labrador
Annual % change in farmland values



*There was an insufficient number of publicly reported transactions to accurately assess farmland values in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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